

Preventing Obesity, Ensuring Readiness (FY05-5040)

Note: this is a new HPPI project for FY05. Additional project information and specific project outcomes and lessons learned will be added to this summary as the project progresses.

The health problem or issue

This program seeks to prevent obesity among Active Duty Soldiers. Americans are battling the problem of obesity, from which Soldiers are not immune. Obesity in the warfighter degrades readiness and physical performance and increases risk for injury. A proactive approach to assist Soldiers in weight management is always important; this approach is especially essential during time of war.

Anticipated outcome

Early weight management screening at the unit level will decrease weight and body fat issues and prevent a decline in physical readiness.

Unique and/or innovative program aspects

The Army Weight Control Program is reactive: the Soldier exceeds body fat standards and then is referred for education. This initiative uses a “train the trainer” program that enables unit leadership to identify and assist at-risk Soldiers before being overweight becomes a problem.

Demonstration of program effectiveness and/or impact

This program was piloted with one infantry brigade. The Brigade CSM recommended the program to the Division CSM. Data identified some of the challenges Soldiers face maintaining body fat standards. This data will further shape the “checklist” given to units to assist at-risk Soldiers.

Impact on force readiness and deployability

By empowering NCOs at the unit level with a screening tool to identify Soldiers at high risk for weight/ body fat gain, and by training them to provide actionable and accurate information to the at-risk Soldier, the program can prevent overweight issues before a Soldier is flagged. Preventing increased body fat or weight will also prevent a decline in physical readiness.

Impact on the HPPI portfolio

Program materials and outcomes will be included in a Weight Management Resource Guide.